

Margolis, David

From: [REDACTED] (USA [REDACTED]) [REDACTED]@usdoj.gov
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2007 4:44 PM
To: Margolis, David
Subject: Ouch

Those Fired U.S. Attorneys [Ramesh Ponnuru]

The administration has the legal right to fire U.S. attorneys for pretty much any reason, and even its critics are conceding as much. Republicans can blame the Democrats and the media for letting this story of fired attorneys become a mini-scandal. But the incompetence of the Justice Department also played a role here.

My best guess is that the administration wanted to season and credential some up-and-coming Republican lawyers as it drew to a close. But instead of just saying, "We just wanted some fresh blood in these positions," or something like that, deputy AG Paul McNulty claimed that most of the firings were the result of subpar performances—more or less forcing some of the dismissed attorneys to defend themselves in public, as Dahlia Lithwick wrote on Friday. Nice job.

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3/6/2007